

137 COMMUNITY PROJECTS THAT BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

'Social Capital represents those human connections between people. They make for healthier communities and lives'.

1. Create a community website highlighting community resources and opportunities.
2. Undertake an asset inventory of the local community.
3. Establish a community newspaper focusing on local assets, people and positive and inspiring stories.
4. Collect and promote local histories.
5. Establish local leadership development opportunities.
6. Facilitate street parties / events.
7. Hold regular community celebrations.
8. Instigate recognition events / awards.
9. Establish a community garden.
10. Establish a community workshop / shed.
11. Support local residents to formulate a local community / neighbourhood action plan.
12. Create a local project fund which 3 or more neighbours can apply for street / neighbourhood improvements or events.
13. Facilitate mentoring opportunities / program.
14. Hold passion nights, or 'wild idea generation nights' in local pubs / cafes where residents can get passionate about their community.
15. Instigate a community festival.
16. Establish a neighbourhood house / learning centre.
17. Facilitate community study groups.
18. Establish a community book club.
19. Facilitate carpools.
20. Encourage street / group garage sales.
21. Instigate community / neighbourhood passion and skills audit.
22. Hold music / film nights in local park.
23. Establish a community enterprise.
24. Start up 'Adopt a Grandparent' program.
25. Adopt an international cause and rally community spirit.
26. Build a park / playground / community enhancement feature over a weekend.
27. Encourage passion and skills audits with the membership of community organizations (churches, school parents, local council staff etc).
28. Create a Community Foundation to give people an opportunity to give back to their community and its future.

29. Hold a community *'Reflection and Thinking Day'* to give residents an opportunity to think about where they have come from, and where do they want to go.
30. Establish a daily community web page to exchange news, information, humour, good ideas, and recognition.
31. Create a community welcome committee, welcome kit and welcome events to introduce and warmly welcome newcomers.
32. Form informal walking groups.
33. Begin an *'Our History in the Street'* project - find ways to express 'moments of pride' and interesting local people that have helped build our community and local personalities.
34. Create a *'local history'* column in the local newspaper (with lots of old photo's).
35. Create a community gardening club, and have the local council delegate responsibility and budget for community garden beds.
36. Instigate cooperative sharing arrangements eg. tool library, babysitting cooperative, tool sharing cooperative etc.
37. Start up a community cooperative craft outlet.
38. Instigate a remembrance wall or bricked pathway, where families can purchase a brick to remember their family.
39. Introduce or upgrade a heritage interpretation walking trail.
40. Create a community *'MAD Day'* - Making a Difference Day - where the community, local schools, local organizations etc do a community project that makes our community an even better place.
41. Instigate an annual *'This is us'* competition, involving stories, photo's etc
42. Identify and celebrate local heroes in street art, displays, recognition events, stories etc.
43. Involve locals in planning and erection of a town entrance statement.
44. Introduce *'That's Another Great Idea'* column in the local newspaper.
45. Multiply the number of local information guides by issuing volunteers with a badge *'Ask me, I'm a local'* or presenting hat / coat etc to volunteers willing to spend a fixed weekly time in community CBD (eg. Like the *'Green Coats'* group in Geeveston, Tasmania).
46. Start a *'Can do'* campaign to encourage people to talk up their community.
47. Hold *'Imagine Your Future and Draw It'* competition for local young people.
48. Monitor all the state, national and international youth development / leadership opportunities and encourage / support local young people to apply.
49. Maintain a data base of all ex-students from the community and communicate each year about the community and its opportunities.
50. Ensure the community's newsletter / newspaper is delivered / emailed to all students studying away from the community and ex residents.
51. Support regular school reunions for different school years.

52. Create a Youth Action Group in the community, and provide them with a discretionary budget for their ideas and initiatives.
53. Identify famous '*sons and daughters*' who originated in the community, and invite them back to share their life and community links.
54. Encourage local organizations to 'adopt' a street or flowerbed and care for its beautification and appearance.
55. Organise a local '*Business Retention and Expansion Program*', where teams of local people dialogue with local businesses through use of a structured interview questionnaire which focuses on what helps, hinders or could help local businesses do better. (www.bankofideas.com.au)
56. Organise a welcome and '*thank you for choosing our community*' celebration event every time a local business opens in the community.
57. Include an '*Opportunity to comment and suggest*' survey with annual rate notices.
58. Create a slogan that talks up the community positively. Eg. '*Give me Geraldton Anyday*'.
59. Organise a monthly 'Positive Action' breakfast club that focuses on ideas for community building.
60. Organise '*emu*' or '*giraffe*' awards for people '*who were willing to stick out their necks and made a difference*'.
61. Start up a community and sporting events calendar.
62. Hold annual appreciation events eg. volunteers, local farmers, teachers, emergency service personnel etc.
63. Hold a welcome dinner for all new teachers to the community.
64. Instigate a Neighbour's Week where community members are encouraged to organise activities within their street - provide ideas and small grants, and highlight and reward best practice.
65. Form neighbourhood groups to advise local Council on traffic flow, recreation park usage etc.
66. Instigate a community / neighbour planning process enabling local residents to identify their desired future.
67. Celebrate 'World / National Days/Weeks' (eg. World Youth Day, National Recycling Week, World Environment Day, NAIDOC Day etc), and organize local events.
68. Instigate a local business awards program to highlight and celebrate local businesses.
69. Regularly print and distribute cards to residents highlighting simple actions to improve positive local interaction e.g. '*10 Actions of Good Neighbours*' etc.
70. Introduce free bus services that circulate around the community and key shopping areas.
71. Create a bicycle pool scheme for local professionals to utilise instead of cars for local work / meetings.

72. Provide showering and storage facilities to encourage local workers to walk or cycle to work.
73. Introduce a 'Graffiti Free Scheme' that sees the immediate removal of any graffiti.
74. Through an intensive community consultation program, develop community guidelines / regulations to ensure any developments (especially big box retailing, international food chains etc) fit community aspirations.
75. Foster maximum local ownership of business opportunities.
76. Establish a Community Bank with all profits returned to the community benefit projects.
77. Establish a '**Landmark's Strategy**' for building civic pride and strengthening community identity - targets heritage, architectural, landscapes and public art. (Example: www.hastingsdc.govt.nz)
78. Create a 'Did You Know?' box in the local newspaper to highlight unique events / achievements / famous sons / daughters in the community history.
79. Instigate a competition for a community logo / slogan.
80. Start up community physical fitness programs eg. 'Push ups in the Park' days.
81. Invite community members to gather in a prominent community location for a historic community photograph.
82. Introduce a 'Why I live Where I live' column / segment in the local newspaper / radio station.
83. Hold an annual community 'Giant Street Party'.
84. Invite a local university group to help identify the community's assets and unique features.
85. Support local schools to discover, study and write about local history.
86. Encourage former residents to 'come home' to reside, invest and / or start a business.
87. Start a 'Youth Community Pride' committee.
88. Hold regular youth breakfasts where 15 - 30 olds are invited to express their thoughts and ideas on community development.
89. Create a community dog walking track / reserve / park.
90. Establish an annual Commemorative Tree Planning Ceremony to celebrate children born in the community over the last 12 months.
91. Foster the concept of 'Walking School Buses' - begin with a Walk to School Day.
92. Plan and implement a 'Bright Future' Festival.
93. Draft a 'Community Charter' outlining community values.
94. Establish a set of Community 'Quality of Life' Indicators, and regularly measure community performance and point results.
95. Establish a community cultural foundation that encourages locals to contribute and become 'Friends of the Foundation' to develop arts and culture within the community.

96. Create a 'My Community, My Vision' feature in local newspapers, and ask local leaders / community builders to contribute their views.
97. Invite local organisations to be responsible for a local public art piece where they capture the history and / or focus of their organisation through art form e.g. mural at a local bus stop.
98. Organise a video / photographic competition for local young people to share what they value most about their community.
99. Organise a special market day in the community - Farmers Market, Kids Market, Christmas Market etc.
100. Encourage local businesses to create a workplace giving programme.
(www.partnerships.gov.au)
101. Start up an intergeneration Breakfast Club at the local school.
102. Create community walking events throughout the year and distribute a pamphlet with all the possibilities (www.dpi.wa.gov.au/walking).
103. Produce a 'Walking Together Tool Kit' to assist local community members and organisations understand indigenous protocols.
104. Create a community and family services website and directory. (see example - www.centralcoastfamilies.com.au)
105. Establish a 'Future Community Special Events' entrance feature highlighting future opportunities for community interaction and participation.
106. Provide a local postcard(s) and distribute to residents to use.
107. Create a 'Steps to Respect' Campaign to reduce violence, abuse and neglect in the local community. (www.steps2respect.org.au)
108. Distribute leaflet on '10 Things You Can Do to Make a Home a Violence Free Zone'.
109. Create a local 'Dream Fund' to support residents who have an idea or an event to build community.
110. Create a 'Community Strengthening Coordinator' position in the community (example, Wellington Shire Council - www.wellington.vic.gov.au).
111. Start up a local SIP group - 'Spirituality in the Pub' - groups tend to meet monthly at the local hotel to discuss 'spiritual' issues (contact pub@groups.msn.com for more information).
112. Encourage local businesses to display the work of local artists.
113. Hold a Community Expo which allows all community organisations to display their activities. Use the day to recruit volunteers.
114. Start up an 'Engaging Fathers Program' aimed at emerging fathers and father figures in the lives of children (contact the Family Action Centre for ideas - family@newcastle.edu.au).
115. Initiate a *Little Learners'* Program - a stimulating learning environment to engage brain development in Children aged 0 - 4 years by engaging both child and carer.

(Example: Kellerberrin District High School

<http://www.kellerberrindhs.det.wa.edu.au/little%20learners.htm>)

116. Hold a community get together (Passion night - a night to get passionate about our community) at the local pub and / or coffee shop and discuss questions like -
 - *What do we value most about our community / neighbourhood?*
 - *Share a time when you felt proud of your community*
 - *What would you change in our community?*
 - *What strengths and 'windows of opportunity' could our community build upon?*
117. Create a 'Girls Night Out' monthly event - hold in a local restaurant / hotel with interesting speakers.
118. Spend discretionary funds as local as possible.
119. Explore ways the local library can become more of a community meeting space.
120. Provide incentives (e.g. rate rebates) for businesses to move onto the pavement e.g. café table and chairs, barbeque in front of butcher etc
121. Compile and distribute a sheet indicating '51 ways to make our community a better place'.
122. Celebrate Australia's National Kindness Day - 6th November or the '16 Days of Kindness' (8 - 21 November) when specific days of recognition are highlighted e.g. Special People's Day, Work Day, Teacher's Day, Environment's Day, Senior's Day, Forgiveness Day etc (www.kindness.com.au).
123. Become a 'Child Friendly Community' recognised under UNICEF's Child Friendly City initiative (www.childfriendlycities.org).
124. Create an annual community Volunteer Recognition Breakfast / Barbecue to acknowledge the contribution of local volunteers.
125. Introduce a 'Have a Go Campaign' encouraging residents to try a new experience, hobby, sport, volunteer experience etc.
126. Organise a traditional Indigenous sports event - see www.ausport.gov.au/isp.traditional.asp for details of all the possibilities.
127. Establish a monthly 'Half Full' Club operating with guidelines the focus on opportunities not limitations, positive not negative.
128. Promote and encourage participation in 'Get to Know your Neighbour Day' - last Sunday of March each year (www.neighbourday.com.au).
129. Encourage local businesses and their employees to become 'Reading Buddies' for children in the community. As part of the 'Reading for Life' programme, employees read to a child at school for 45 minutes each week over a 15 week period (www.learninglinks.org.au).
130. Create a two week 'No TV' period - encourage local families to turn off their TV's for two weeks. Organise two weeks of alternative family and children activities.

131. Encourage the local council to employ a 'Barbecue Officer' who systematically invites residents in different streets to meet their neighbours over a street barbecue.
132. Encourage local churches to combine with the organisation of a 24/7 Prayer event - an open prayer venue in the centre of town operating 24 hours a day for 7 days, praying for the needs of the local community.
133. Get involved in Neighbourhood Week
(www.ccc.govt.nz/Programmes/NeighbourhoodWeek/)
134. Organise a Sharehood (www.thesharehood.org)
135. A 'Welcome Home' Program for ex offenders returning from serving time in jail.
136. Coordinate an R U OK? Day within your community (15th September)
137. Promote a neighbourhood day where the following may take place -
 - Say hello and make introductions
 - Bake a batch of muffins and share with the neighbours - or invite them over to share
 - When you mow your grass verge, also do your neighbours
 - Pop a note into everyone's letter boxes asking people if they are interested in meeting socially
 - Exchange phone numbers of case of emergency
 - Hold a street party / barbeque(www.neighboursday.org.nz)